

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SOFIA 1775

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM, CGEN, PFOR, BU

SUBJECT: DIVIDED FAMILIES CASE: YORDANKA AND RUMYANA MAREVA

REF: A) STATE 205513; B) SOFIA 1765; C) STATE 203992; D) STATE
201670; E) SOFIA 430; F) STATE 7646; G) SOFIA 0025;
H) STATE 277039 (1975)

1. WE STRONGLY RECOMMEND AGAINST FURTHER PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT OF SECRETARY IN MAREV CASE UNTIL FACTS ARE CLEARER. AT THIS POINT THERE IS REASON TO BELIEVE MAREV'S STATEMENTS MAY NOT BE COMPLETELY TRUTHFUL AND THAT THE TWO DAUGHTERS WHOM HE AND HIS WIFE ABANDONED NINE YEARS AGO DO NOT WISH TO LEAVE BULGARIA. IT MUST BE NOTED THAT THESE CHILDREN WERE ONE AND THREE YEARS OLD, RESPECTIVELY, WHEN THE PARENTS LEFT. THEY HAVE NOW BEEN INTEGRATED INTO A FOSTER FAMILY (WHOSE HEAD IS ALSO THEIR LEGAL GUARDIAN) AND MAY REALLY BE MORE ATTACHED TO THAT FAMILY THAN TO THEIR REAL PARENTS. IT IS THUS VERY DIFFICULT TO DETERMINE WHERE THE BALANCE OF HUMANITARIAN INTEREST LIES. THERE IS NOT ENOUGH EVIDENCE AT THIS POINT, AS NOTED REF B, TO JUSTIFY A CONCLUSION THAT THE BULGARIAN GOVERNMENT IS RETAINING THE GIRLS AGAINST THEIR WILL OR OTHERWISE ACTING CONTRARY TO ITS PLEDGE ON THE REUNIFICATION OF DIVIDED FAMILIES.

2. IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER THAT IN THE CASE OF LYUBOMIR KHRISTOV, A BULGARIAN YOUTH OF LESS THAN LEGAL AGE WHO RESIDES IN CALIFORNIA, THE USG HAS TAKEN THE
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POSITION THAT IT CANNOT FORCE THE RETURN TO BULGARIA OF

SOMEONE WHO DOES NOT WISH TO RETURN. (SEE REFS E THROUGH H.) ADDITIONALLY, IN THE KHRISTOV CASE THE CALIFORNIA COURTS HAVE IMPOSED SEVERE CONDITIONS AS TO ANY MEETING BETWEEN KHRISTOV AND BULGARIAN EMBASSY OFFICIALS (SEE REF H). (IN REF E, WE URGED THAT THE DEPARTMENT PRESS THE CALIFORNIA COURTS TO ALLOW THE BULGARIAN EMBASSY TO INTERVIEW YOUNG KHRISTOV PRIVATELY; APPARENTLY THIS WAS NEVER DONE.) WE MUST EXPECT THAT A REQUEST BY THIS EMBASSY TO INTERVIEW THE MAREV GIRLS WOULD BE DEALT WITH SIMILARLY BY THE GOB, EVEN IF IT WERE PREPARED TO HAVE BULGARIAN CITIZENS IN BULGARIA INTERVIEWED BY AN AMERICAN CONSULAR OFFICER ABOUT WHETHER THEY WISH TO LEAVE THEIR COUNTRY.

3. MAREV'S BROTHER-IN-LAW ZHELEZOV, HAS NOT YET REPLIED TO EMBASSY LETTERS. IT WOULD BE BEST IF WE COULD INTERVIEW HIM AGAIN BEFORE PROCEEDING, BUT IN ANY CASE WE NEED TO HAVE THE FULL DOCUMENTATION REQUESTED PARAGRAPH 6, REF B, BEFORE TACKLING THE GOB. WE ARE OF COURSE PREPARED TO DO ALL WE CAN, BUT FROM INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO US SO FAR IT DOES NOT RPT NOT APPEAR TO BE A CASE (LIKE THAT, FOR INSTANCE, OF EMILIA MATEEVA COLLINS) WHERE WE CAN PULL OUT ALL THE STOPS.
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